

12. Proceedings in Probate Court in the same year, by which interest the minor heirs of Serena S. Young became vested in Alex. H. Young.

13. Another partition deed to correct errors in description of lands not blocked off in former deed, reciting and approving the former; the same in all other respects, between the same parties (except in place of Serena S. Young, deceased, was Alexander H. Young, "by M. Blair, their attorney in fact"). Dated May 1, 1854.

14. Deed from Anna R. Poole to John C. Hayes, ratifying and confirming the former deed of partition, and confirming the acts of Blair and Black as agents, September 1, 1858.

15. Similar deed to Hayes *et al.*, from Jos. Lyons and wife, November 10, 1858.

16. Similar deed to Hayes *et al.*, from Alex. H. Young, March 27, 1860.

Subsequent to the chain of conveyances traced, the title is vested in numerous owners, there being no other general claims. All the technicalities and defects which ingenuity can discover have been brought to notice. The numerous adverse titles had for years hung over property-holders like an incubus, and in the early part of the year 1869 the people began an organized movement to defeat them. The position of affairs was somewhat critical. The city was rapidly growing, and to allow the idea to go abroad that titles were insecure would check the progress of the city and cause incalculable mischief. Sound business policy overcame the desire to make a bitter fight, however, and the holders of the claims were induced to dispose of them at rates that were trivial. The specific claims were the Pretermitted Heirs' Title, the Sisters' Title, the Irving Title, and the Cost Title, and these comprised all general titles asserted by anybody to land within the City of Oakland. These titles were, by their several owners, conveyed to Henry Hillebrand, the City Clerk, who acted as a Trustee, and by him conveyance was made to the several property holders. Nearly all the land in the city is now held by a perfect title, the Hillebrand deed removing all the clouds. These titles, except the Cost Title, still cloud property outside of the old charter line. The principal ones, the Sisters and the Pretermitted Heirs', are virtually defeated, and the property-holders, to save trouble and annoyance, have quite generally purchased the other claims.

The Kate Hayes Title covers that portion of Oakland township outside of the Encinal Line, as laid down on our map. The Supreme Court of the State has sustained a decision rendered by E. W. McKinstrey, Judge of the Twelfth District Court, granting a new trial on the motion made by the defendants (the property holders). That decision was fatal to the claim, which, in itself, was but for a trifling interest.

#### WATER AND GAS.

CONTRA COSTA WATER COMPANY.—Oakland contained less than five thousand inhabitants, when, in 1866, the above entitled company was incorporated. The master spirit of the enterprise, A. Chabot, had previously been one of three persons to introduce water into San Francisco. The first work done was the construction of two small reservoirs in the foot-hills beyond Temescal. Eight or ten miles of pipe were laid, and Oakland was first supplied from this source, which has the capacity to supply about fifteen thousand people. The elevation above the city base is four hundred feet. It is intended now that these reservoirs shall supply the high lands back of Brooklyn, Piedmont Park, and the cemeteries. But the great fountain of aqueous supply to the city of Oakland is a lake on San Leandro Creek, eight miles from the city, and one mile east from San Leandro. This lake is two hundred feet above the city base,